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AFGHANISTAN

BEFORE & AFTER Better Irrigation Brings Better Life

USAID rebuilds karezes in Daman to improve agricultural output

For decades, the farmers that derive their livelihood from the karez systems in Daman District have watched as the ability to irrigate their crops slowly degraded. Sections of karez tunnels and bore holes were clogged with soil deposited during the rainy season by frequent flooding. Consequently, less water reached the farms and agricultural output plummeted. As a result, many farmers were forced to leave their land because they couldn't support their families.

In response, Central Asia Development Group implemented two USAID-funded economic stability projects to reconstruct 18 karezes in the district. Closely collaborating with local government officials, the project created 3,145 temporary jobs, and injected more than \$1.2 million in wages into the local economy. More importantly, the amount of irrigated land has grown from 129.6 ha to 230.6 ha, an increase of 78 percent, and more than 250 families have returned to their farms to resume agriculture.



Photo: USAID/CDP/CADG

BEFORE A farmer provides evidence of the state of his land in Daman district. The degraded condition of the karez system prevented area farmers from receiving adequate amounts of irrigation water to sustain their farmland. Consequently, farmers were forced to reduce their agricultural output.



Photo: USAID/CDP/CADG

AFTER Today, the reconstructed karez system irrigates 56 percent more arable land, and farmers are able to increase their agricultural output to sustainable levels. Farmers anticipate their production to increase considerably in the future.